









<div><div></div><div>Steps To Excellence Project Promoting Quality Child Care</div></div>																				
QUALITY RATING STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS																				
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<div>REGULATORY COMPLIANCE</div> <div></div>	<p>All child care programs rated by STEP hold a child care license from California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) for at least 12 months. STEP has confirmed the child care licensee is: 1) <u>not</u> probationary; 2) <u>not</u> involved in a compliance plan; and 3) has <u>not</u> been fined for failing to correct a deficiency in timely manner or for repeated offenses.</p>																			
<div>TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS</div> <div></div>	<div>TEACHER-CHILD RATIOS:</div> <table><tr><td>Infants (0-2yrs): 1 teacher to 4 infants -or- 1 teacher to 12 infants (and at least 2 aides, each supervising no more than 4 infants for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio).</td><td>Infants (0-2yrs): 1 teacher to 10 infants with at least 2 aides (each aide supervising no more than 3 infants for a 1:3 staff-to-child ratio).</td><td>Infants (0-18mo): 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1:3 staff-to-child ratio.</td><td>Infants (0-18mo): 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1:3 staff-to-ratio.</td><td>1 Infant (0-15mo): 1 teacher to 8 infants with 1 staff to 3 or 4 infants.</td></tr><tr><td>Toddlers (18-30 mo): 1 teacher to 6 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 12 children.</td><td>Toddlers (18-30 mo): 1 teacher to 5 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 10 children.</td><td>Toddlers (18-35mo): 1 teacher to 16 children with 3 aides for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.</td><td>Toddlers (18-35mo): 1 teacher to 16 children with 3 aides for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.</td><td>Toddlers (12-28mo): 1 teacher to 12 children with additional aides for a 1:3 or 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.</td></tr><tr><td>Preschool (2-5yrs): 1 teacher to 12 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 15 children -or- 1 teacher (and 1 aide with 6 early childhood education college units) to 18 children.</td><td>Preschool (2-5 yrs): 1 teacher to 10 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 14 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide (with 6 early childhood education units) to 17 children.</td><td>Preschool (3-5yrs): 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1:8 staff-to-child ratio.</td><td>Preschool (3-5yrs): 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1:8 staff-to-child ratio.</td><td>Younger Preschool (30-48mo): 1 teacher to 18 children, with additional aides for a 1:6 to 1:9 staff-to-child ratio. Older Preschool (4-5yrs): 1 teacher to 24 children, with additional aides for a 1:8 to 1:10 staff-to-child ratio.</td></tr></table>					Infants (0-2yrs): 1 teacher to 4 infants -or- 1 teacher to 12 infants (and at least 2 aides, each supervising no more than 4 infants for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio).	Infants (0-2yrs): 1 teacher to 10 infants with at least 2 aides (each aide supervising no more than 3 infants for a 1:3 staff-to-child ratio).	Infants (0-18mo): 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1:3 staff-to-child ratio.	Infants (0-18mo): 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1:3 staff-to-ratio.	1 Infant (0-15mo): 1 teacher to 8 infants with 1 staff to 3 or 4 infants.	Toddlers (18-30 mo): 1 teacher to 6 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 12 children.	Toddlers (18-30 mo): 1 teacher to 5 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 10 children.	Toddlers (18-35mo): 1 teacher to 16 children with 3 aides for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.	Toddlers (18-35mo): 1 teacher to 16 children with 3 aides for a 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.	Toddlers (12-28mo): 1 teacher to 12 children with additional aides for a 1:3 or 1:4 staff-to-child ratio.	Preschool (2-5yrs): 1 teacher to 12 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 15 children -or- 1 teacher (and 1 aide with 6 early childhood education college units) to 18 children.	Preschool (2-5 yrs): 1 teacher to 10 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 14 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide (with 6 early childhood education units) to 17 children.	Preschool (3-5yrs): 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1:8 staff-to-child ratio.	Preschool (3-5yrs): 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1:8 staff-to-child ratio.	Younger Preschool (30-48mo): 1 teacher to 18 children, with additional aides for a 1:6 to 1:9 staff-to-child ratio. Older Preschool (4-5yrs): 1 teacher to 24 children, with additional aides for a 1:8 to 1:10 staff-to-child ratio.
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INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS 	IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	No criteria.	The child care program is aware of support available through basic early intervention services provided by the local Regional Center and the local school district(s).	<p>Meets Step2+: The child care program makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the center. Program works with families to screen their children within <u>90 days</u> of enrollment.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment, such as: the local Regional Center, the local school district and/or other resources.</p>	<p>Meets Step2+: The child care program makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the center. Program works with families to screen their children within <u>90 days</u> of enrollment <u>and</u> at least <u>once</u> a year thereafter.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.</p>	<p>Meets Step 2+: The child care program makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the center. Program works with families to screen their children within <u>45 days</u> of enrollment <u>and</u> at least <u>twice</u> a year thereafter.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.</p>
	INCLUSION QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	No criteria.	<p>Families of children with special needs are welcomed to the program.</p> <p>A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p>	<p>Families of children with special needs are welcomed to the program.</p> <p>A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment <u>and</u> activities are implemented to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p>	<p>Meets Step 3+: Clear and explicit intervention strategies and adaptations are based on assessment results and are implemented to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p>	<p>Meets Step 4+: A monitoring system is implemented to observe and record children's progress and to determine if further assessment is needed.</p>
	SPECIAL NEEDS TRAINING QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	No criteria.	At least 1 staff member has completed in the past 3 years professional development training that prepares them to work with children with special needs.	At least 1 staff member has completed specialized college coursework <u>or</u> , in the past 3 years, has completed professional development training that prepares her/him to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools. This individual is available to assist colleagues.	At least 1 staff member in each classroom has completed specialized college coursework <u>and</u> , in the past 3 years, has completed professional development trainings that prepare them to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools.	A majority of teaching staff have completed specialized college coursework <u>and</u> , in the past 18 months, have completed professional development training that prepares them to work children with special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools.
STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & WORKING CONDITIONS 	PROGRAM DIRECTOR QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Program Director has completed a minimum of 15 units in Early Childhood Education (ECE) <u>and</u> has at least 4 years teaching experience in ECE.	Program Director has at least an Associate of Arts (AA) degree in ECE -or- Holds an AA in another field with at least 12 ECE units and has at least 1 year administrative experience.	Program Director holds or has applied for a Child Development Site Supervisor Permit.	Program Director holds or has applied for a Child Development Program Director Permit.	Program Director has a Master of Arts (MA) in ECE or related field, <u>and</u> holds or has applied for a Program Director Permit.

QUALITY STANDARDS	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<div>STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & WORKING CONDITIONS</div> <div></div>	LEAD TEACHER QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Each classroom (or group of children) is staffed by at least 1 teacher who has completed 12 units in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and has 6 months teaching experience.	Fifty percent (50%) of the classrooms (or groups of children) are staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit. The remaining classrooms (or groups of children) are staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit.	Each classroom (or group of children) is staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit.	Each classroom (or group of children) is staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Master Teacher Permit.	Each classroom (or group of children) is staffed by at least 1 teacher who either: has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in ECE -or- has a BA/BS in another field and has completed at least 12 units in ECE.
	ASSISTANT TEACHER QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	If there are 18 or more children in a group or class, at least 1 assistant has completed 6 units in ECE.	All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, have completed 6 units in ECE.	All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, hold or have applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit.	All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, hold or have applied for a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit.	All other teaching staff hold or have applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit.
	STAFF STABILITY QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	No criteria.	At least 60% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.	At least 80% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.	At least 85% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.	At least 90% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS QUALITY STANDARDS:					
No criteria.	Program offers access to health insurance.	Program offers access to partially-paid health insurance (or menu of appropriate options).	Program offers access to partially-paid health and dental insurance (or appropriate menu).	Program offers access to partially-paid health, dental insurance and pension plan (or appropriate menu).	
WORKING CONDITIONS QUALITY STANDARDS:					
The child care program has a written staffing plan (which specifies the qualifications and duties of staff) and a plan for in-service education of staff.	Meets Step 1+: Child care program implements 4 staff meetings per year, has formal grievance procedures, implements a salary scale and provides employees with the following: ▪ Written confirmation of job title, salary and hours; and ▪ Written job descriptions.	Meets Step 2+: Child care program implements 6 staff meetings per year and provides employees with the following: ▪ Paid time-off (e.g. sick time, vacation time); ▪ Annual employee evaluations; and ▪ Professional development plans.	Meets STEP 3+: Child care program implements monthly staff meetings and provides employees with the following: ▪ A salary scale which rewards education and experience (and staff are aware of the salary scale); and ▪ Paid preparation and planning time.	Meets STEP 4+: Child care program gives employees paid release time to provide professional development training and to participate in professional development activities and implements a salary scale that is aligned with the Los Angeles County Model Compensation Scale.	
<div>FAMILY & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS</div> <div></div>	FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	The child care program informs parents of their right to visit and/or observe their children in the program and welcome such visits.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 3 parent involvement strategies from Section A. Applies at least 3 parent communication strategies from Section B.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 5 parent involvement strategies from Section A. Applies at least 5 parent communication strategies from Section B. Applies at least 4 parent support strategies from Section C. Applies at least 4 parent-community connection strategies from Section D.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 6 parent involvement strategies from Section A. Applies at least 6 parent communication strategies from Section B. Applies at least 6 parent support strategies from Section C. Applies at least 6 parent-community connection strategies from Section D.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 8 parent involvement strategies from Section A. Applies at least 8 parent communication strategies from Section B. Applies at least 8 parent support strategies from Section C. Applies at least 8 parent-community connection strategies from Section D.

FAMILY
&
COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS



SECTION A: LIST OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

- ☐ A1). Child care program offers a comprehensive orientation to all families.
- ☐ A2). Program has a parent handbook that describes the its mission statement, educational philosophy, policies and procedures.
- ☐ A3). Program provides written materials in home language(s) of families.
- ☐ A4). Program communicates in home languages of families, including securing adults to translate as needed.
- ☐ A5). A variety of opportunities exist for parents to contribute to the child care program (e.g. in-class helpers, field trips, donated items).
- ☐ A6). Program implements activities/materials that incorporate the cultures of enrolled families and the community at large.
- ☐ A7). Program hosts two annual group activities for children and their families (e.g. family picnic, potluck).
- ☐ A8). Program uses family schedules to determine meeting and event times.
- ☐ A9). Program offers families opportunities to participate in leadership/decision-making positions (e.g. Advisory Committees).
- ☐ A10). Program staff use creative strategies to adapt the program to meet family needs.

SECTION B: LIST OF PARENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- ☐ B1). Program uses a communication system that uses families' preferred communication means.
- ☐ B2). Staff schedules allow for meaningful communications with families.
- ☐ B3). Program offers one (1) scheduled parent/teacher conference per year to discuss child's progress.
- ☐ B4). Program offers two (2) scheduled parent/teacher conferences per year to discuss child's progress; additional parent conferences are available by request.
- ☐ B5). Program completes an annual, written developmental report for each child.
- ☐ B6). Calendars of daily schedule and activities are readily available to families.
- ☐ B7). Program uses a group information dissemination system, such as a newsletter.
- ☐ B8). Program implements annual home visits.
- ☐ B9). Program offers families opportunities to help shape curriculum and program practices.
- ☐ B10). Program intentionally partners with families, recognizing parents as their child's first and most important teacher.

SECTION C: LIST OF PARENT SUPPORT STRATEGIES

- ☐ C1). Program offers opportunities for mutual support among families.
- ☐ C2). Program offers library services for families to check out books, toys, videos and/or resource materials.
- ☐ C3). Program offers information and coaching about healthy child growth and development.
- ☐ C4). Program works with families to implement strategies to create consistency between home practices and the child care program's developmentally appropriate practices.
- ☐ C5). Program offers families child-specific, home-based activity ideas based on child's talents and opportunities for growth.
- ☐ C6). Program has a physical space where parents can gather and meet.
- ☐ C7). Program has a support person for families to address areas of need (e.g. social workers, legal advocate, early intervention specialist).
- ☐ C8). Program creates family support plans and conducts an annual review of such plans (or more often as needed).
- ☐ C9). Program offers training and support for parents to develop their advocacy skills.
- ☐ C10). Program offers support and encouragement for parents to become better informed primary decision makers for their child.

SECTION D: LIST OF PARENT/COMMUNITY CONNECTION STRATEGIES

- ☐ D1). Program cultivates working relationships with public and community-based services (e.g. health, education, and social services).
- ☐ D2). Program develops and maintains a current list of community resources.
- ☐ D3). Program links families to identified liaisons in public and community-based services.
- ☐ D4). Qualified program staff participate in assessment/evaluation meetings with families (e.g. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings).
- ☐ D5). Program staff Initiate discussions about kindergarten at least one year prior to kindergarten entry.
- ☐ D6). Program engages in transition-to-school activities, in partnership with established school/center liaisons (e.g. hosting information sessions for parents, offering field trips/school visits and on-site enrollment support).
- ☐ D7). Program helps families navigate community resources and provides direct advocacy as needed.
- ☐ D8). Program invites community programs to share their areas of expertise with staff, parents and children (e.g. library, local artists, police, story tellers, etc).
- ☐ D9). Program informs families of relevant, local community events.
- ☐ D10). Program relays policy changes at local, state or national levels that effect early care and education services to families.